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To reconstruct these local texts is our immediate business; but what will come next? The "True Text," of which exegetes talk so much and critics see so little? Perhaps; but my own imagination (for, except in imagination, I have never even got back to a properly reconstructed local text) rather pictures that terrible thing — the *synoptic problem*.

I cannot help wishing that some stronger hint of this were given in Dr. Kenyon's book. At the same time, I must admit that there is another side to the question. No book can ever be really up to date, and in limiting his discussion practically to a statement of the past, and avoiding all forecast of the future, a writer does much to secure the permanent accuracy of his work, so far as it goes. Fallible humanity has often to choose between accuracy and suggestiveness, nor is it the critic's place to censure a writer's choice; and I would wish to end, as I began, by acknowledging the goodness and usefulness of Dr. Kenyon's book.

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**Theology and the Social Consciousness.** By HENRY CHURCHILL KING, D.D., President of Oberlin College. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1902. Pp. xviii + 252. \$1.25.

This volume is a sequel to the author's *Reconstruction in Theology*, which appeared in 1901. It is an elaboration of a course of lectures delivered at the Harvard Summer School of Theology in 1901, and repeated at the University of Chicago in the summer of 1902. A book of this character from the pen of a teacher of theology would until very recently have been inconceivable for two reasons: (1) So long as theology was regarded as the objective elaboration of doctrines externally given by authority, it stood out of any organic relationship to other sciences. It was self-sufficient. It is only when we conceive theology, as Dr. King does, as 'the thoughtful, comprehensive, and unified expression of what religion means to us' (p. 6) that the way is open for a study of the religious consciousness in relation to other aspects of consciousness. (2) The data which Dr. King collects under the title "Social Consciousness," have only recently been clearly apprehended, as sociology has enlarged the field of psychology.

The argument of the book may be summed up as follows: Theology is the product of human thinking on the subject of religious experience. But human thinking is always shaped by a *Zeitgeist*, which takes pos-

session of men. Theology, therefore, if it is vital, will feel the influence of this subtle psychological atmosphere. The *Zeitgeist* of our time is the emphasis upon certain affirmations of the "social consciousness."

Part I treats of "The Real Meaning of the Social Consciousness for Theology." The sense of the like-mindedness of men, of their mutual influence, of the sacredness and value of the person, of ethical obligations—these are the chief elements in the "social consciousness." If we are true to these affirmations, we are led to assert that ethical and personal relationships are the supreme realities. In order to make a place for these we must believe in a moral universe and a personal God as their *sine qua non*. The social consciousness may thus be a very important factor in our religious and theological thinking.

In Part II the author considers the "Influence of the Social Consciousness upon the Conception of Religion." What will be the result of carrying into our religious ideals the emphasis upon personal and ethical relationship? Evidently any vague or emotional types of religion cannot stand the test. The criticism of mysticism (pp. 55-82) on the basis of the proposed criterion ought to be read by every pastor and religious teacher. A conception of religion which belittles personality in God and man, which cuts itself loose from historic foundations, which substitutes emotional for ethical tests, which "fosters an irreverent familiarity with Christ" (may we not add, with the Holy Spirit?), needs just the keen criticism which Dr. King has furnished. If the principles discussed in these pages could be clearly apprehended by Christians generally, we should see a radical transformation of aim and aspiration which would introduce wholesome, sincere spirituality in the place of abnormal, emotional ecstasy. Again, the emphasis upon ethical values means that communion with God must be sought and found by recognizing the voice of God in the mandates of duty. In the inner sense of triumph and joy when one yields obedience to the claims of duty we may experience the divine blessing and may share the life of God. Christian faith means "the power to submit with joy" to the moral imperative.

Part III deals with the "Influence of the Social Consciousness upon Theological Doctrine." This influence is described as follows:

The foreign and unreal seeming of many of the old forms of statement . . . has its probable cause just here. They were not shaped in the atmosphere of the social consciousness. They got at things in a way we should not now think of using. The method of approach was too merely metaphysical and individualistic and mystical, and the result seems to us to have but

slight ethical or religious significance. The arguments that now move us most in this entire realm of spiritual inquiry are moral and social rather than metaphysical and mystical.

The application of the author's principle to various theological doctrines is full of fruitful suggestions. The results are by no means ordinarily in the direction of repudiating traditional positions. For example, in discussing the problem of redemption, the vital reality underlying the doctrine of substitutionary atonement is admirably set forth. The divinity of Christ is shown to be the only adequate explanation of the qualities of his character and mission.

Among the unfortunate difficulties which confront the Christian preacher today, one of the greatest is the spirit of distrust toward the church manifested by various social movements. This book ought to help toward a mutual understanding between theologians and social reformers. It shows that Christian thinkers today are not indifferent to the demands of the social consciousness; and it also shows the added strength which social movements can gain by an alliance with religious beliefs and motives. It is a timely and valuable message and deserves a wide hearing.

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